



## UNIT BREAKDOWN

**ACT I****0. PLACES PLEASE**

*(Sets up the action of the play, establishes that the cast are part of a fluid movement of scenery and that the locations are suggested and constantly changing. They are welcoming the audience into their world, and one of the largest portions of un-accompanied dialogue in the play.)*

UNIT 0.A	<u>The Loft</u>	(M): Introduces, (R ): Ignores	pg1
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**1. TUNE UP A**

*(Informs us that it is Xmas Eve, that Mark is a filmmaker, and that Roger is a musician and recovering addict. Sets up the playful and sometimes brutally honest relationship between the roommates)*

UNIT 1.A	<u>December 24, 9pm</u>	(M): Teases, (R ) Deflects	pg1
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UNIT 1.B	<u>False Start #1</u>	(M): Pins Down, (R ) Admits	pg2
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UNIT 1.C	<u>Phone Save #1</u>	(M): Relents, (R ) Savors	pg2
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**1a. VOICE MAIL #1**

*(Packed full of exposition, lets us know that Mark's mom is a part of his life, that he is ignoring her, and, most importantly, that Maureen just dumped Mark. Also sets up the theatrical convention of hearing voice mails in the apartment)*

UNIT 1a.A	<u>C'est La Vie</u>	(MM): Embarrasses, (M) Endures	pg2
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**2. TUNE UP B**

*(This unit is full of misdirection. After setting up the voicemail convention, we see the roommates answer it, and are introduced to Collins, who is subsequently beaten -showing how rough of a neighborhood the boys inhabit. We are introduced to the central conflict of the play that their former roommate, Benny, is demanding rent from Mark and Roger. The inciting incident is the power blowing—the final straw.)*

UNIT 2.A	<u>False Start #2</u>	(M): Regroups, (R): Continues	pg3
UNIT 2.B	<u>Phone Save #2</u>	(M): Backs off, (R): Celebrates	pg3
UNIT 2.C	<u>Collins!</u>	(M/R): Rejoices, (C): Greets	pg4
UNIT 2.D	<u>May Be Detained</u>	(C): Prepares, (M): Questions	pg4
UNIT 2.E	<u>Benny! (Shit)</u>	(B): Ambushes, (M/R): Reels	pg4
UNIT 2.F	<u>What Rent?</u>	(B): Scolds, (M/R): Complains	pg5
UNIT 2.G	<u>Maureen/Joanne</u>	(B): Mocks, (M/R): Reminisces	pg5
UNIT 2.H	<u>The Power Blows</u>	(R): Defies, (M): Incites	pg6

### **3. RENT**

*(This is Roger and Mark speaking out against “The Man”; the ensemble shifts from the beginning of the song as manifestations in their brain to the wider community who, like the roommates, suffer from poverty, disease, and manipulation. This establishes that rent is not a physical thing, but a metaphor: a symptom; it is making people pay for the right to live.)*

UNIT 3.A	<u>Document &amp; Write</u>	(M/R): Demonizes & Rebels	pg6
UNIT 3.B	<u>Light Up a Mean Blaze</u>	(M/R): Engulfs & Plots	pg7
UNIT 3.C	<u>Substitute Production Manager</u>	(J): Breaks the News	pg8
UNIT 3.D	<u>Getting Dizzy</u>	(C): Hangs on, (M): Questions	pg8
UNIT 3.E	<u>Allison Baby</u>	(B): Complains	pg9
UNIT 3.F	<u>Feel the Heat</u>	(M/R): Exults, (C/J): Endures	pg9
UNIT 3.G	<u>Call Their Bluff</u>	(M/R): Challenges & Overwhelms	pg10
UNIT 3.H	<u>Everything Is Rent</u>	(M/R): Draws Line in the Sand	pg11

### **4. CHRISTMAS BELLS #1**

*(Sets up the convention of homeless carolers setting up a new scene or movement. Also shows the caricature that Xmas has become; instead of a time of contemplation and celebration, it is a time of consumerism and willful ignorance.)*

UNIT 4.A      Somewhere Else – Not Here      (H): Mocks & Laments      pg11

### **5. YOU OKAY, HONEY**

*(Shows us the first real act of kindness and compassion in the play, and it is from one gay man to another. We also get critical exposition that Roger is not alone with AIDS, but Collins and Angel are also afflicted. We are shown that Angel is a musician and that there is real chemistry between the two men.)*

UNIT 5.A      I'm Angel      (A): Examines, (C): Probes      pg11

UNIT 5.B      Home for AIDS      (A): Cheers Up, (C): Surrenders      pg12

### **6. TUNE UP – REPRISE**

*(Another rare opportunity for spoken dialogue, again to get the audience to pay closer attention to the information being provided, that Roger has AIDS. Puts an entirely new spin on Roger's "I'm writing one great song...". Establishes that Mark is leaving for Maureen's sound equipment, although, strangely, the next time we see him he is back in the loft for Angel and Collin's arrival...THEN appears at the performance lot. I think this is a possible chronological mistake, that they needed to get Mark out of the loft in order for Roger and Mimi to meet, and also liked "Tango Maureen" after "Today For You". Otherwise, it would make no sense for Mark to leave for the lot, come back, then leave for the lot, then come back, then leave for the lot one last time without textual support. I doubt the audience will notice and/or care, though.)*

UNIT 6.A      April, AIDS, & Suicide      (R): Mocks, (M): Encourages      pg13

### **7. ONE SONG GLORY**

*(This establishes Roger's central drive for the play: that he is looking for one great song before he dies. He is in the bargaining phase of dying; he can die, but only after he has secured his legacy. He goes from bargaining in the verses to anger in the chorus. The idea of time dying is also extremely sad and poetic.)*

UNIT 7.A      One Last Refrain      (R): Laments      pg13

UNIT 7.B      Time Dies      (R): Challenges      pg14

UNIT 7.C      Redeem This Empty Life      (R): Complains      pg14

UNIT 7.D      The Door      (R): Announces      pg15

**8. LIGHT MY CANDLE**

*(This is a direct nod from “La Bohème”, but it takes on so much more meaning here. We are introduced to Mimi and find out she is a stripper and addict and, more importantly, that she has sparked something in Roger that he thought died with April. Roger’s new found feelings are tempered with the knowledge that, due to AIDS, that the act of loving Mimi can literally kill her. This song marks a huge shift in Roger’s character. Mimi comes in looking for a candle flame, most likely to help shoot heroin, but leaves looking for something altogether different. I’ve chosen to add the fact that Mimi leaves her candle in the loft when taking the drugs, which will have an important impact in subsequent scenes.)*

UNIT 8.A	<u>Got a Light?</u>	(Mi): Fascinates, (R): Ponders	pg15
UNIT 8.B	<u>What Are You Staring At?</u>	(Mi): Confronts, (R): Probes	pg15
UNIT 8.C	<u>Sorry About Your Friend</u>	(Mi): Goes for it, (R): Recovers	pg16
UNIT 8.D	<u>Dripping Wax</u>	(Mi): Seduces, (R): Rejects	pg16
UNIT 8.E	<u>Dropped My Stash</u>	(Mi): Ignores, (R): Puzzles	pg16
UNIT 8.F	<u>Best Ass Below 14<sup>th</sup> Street</u>	(Mi): Twines, (R): Falls	pg17
UNIT 8.G	<u>Cat Scratch Club</u>	(R): Teases, (Mi): Justifies	pg17
UNIT 8.H	<u>Used to Be a Junkie</u>	(R): Scolds, (Mi): Bristles	pg18
UNIT 8.I	<u>Candy Bar Wrapper</u>	(R): Hides, (Mi): Sneaks	pg18
UNIT 8.J	<u>My Last Match</u>	(R): Distracts, (Mi): Fortifies	pg19
UNIT 8.K	<u>Cold Hands</u>	(Mi): Chills, (R): Falters	pg19
UNIT 8.L	<u>Wanna Dance?</u>	(Mi): Ensnares, (R): Crumbles	pg19
UNIT 8.M	<u>They Call Me Mimi</u>	(Mi): Snaps the trap, (R): Reels	pg19

**9. VOICE MAIL #2**

*(This is another opportunity to gain information on supporting characters, notably Maureen and Joanne. We are allowed to hear Maureen but not see her in order to better set up her entrance at the end of “Christmas Bells”. Although this is a strong choice, it does make it harder for the audience to grapple with the “who’s-who” of the love triangle. We get illuminating information on Joanne, that her dad works for the State Department and that her mom is in the process of being confirmed as a federal judge. And that they know that Joanne is a lesbian, but it is uncertain that they’re altogether comfortable with it.)*

UNIT 9.A	<u>Moon Over Maureen</u>	(Ma): Advertises	pg19
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UNIT 9.B	<u>Stage Managing Or Something</u>	(Mr.J): Greets, (Mrs. J): Scolds	pg20
UNIT 9.C	<u>The Hearings</u>	(Mr.J): Endures, (Mrs.J): Bombards	pg21

## 10. TODAY FOR YOU A

*(We finally get to see the true friendship that exists among Collins, Mark, and Roger. This is also a nod to “La Bohème”, as the Bohemians relish the opportunity to enjoy food, warmth, and alcohol. We are told there’s a party at Life Café after Maureen’s show, and that Collins has been fired from MIT but will be working at NYU. This also wonderfully sets up Angel’s entrance as a vibrant and exciting drag queen.)*

UNIT 10.A	<u>Calypso Collins</u>	(R): Ignores, (M): Introduces, (C): Showers	pg21
UNIT 10.B	<u>Three Amigos</u>	(R): Succumbs, (C): Invigorates	pg21
UNIT 10.C	<u>Angel Dumott Schunard</u>	(C): Exalts, (R/M): Await	pg22

## 10a. TODAY FOR YOU B

*(This song sets up the running joke about Benny’s Akita-Evita, that Angel forced her to dive off the window due to her drumming. This is also a nod to “La Bohème”, where the Bohemians would do odd jobs for wealthy patrons for money that they would immediately blow on food and booze. Most importantly, this song sets up Angel’s chops as a percussionist and dancer, and is the first time that life is breathed into Roger and Mark’s flat.)*

UNIT 10a.A	This Akita-Evita	(A): Mesmerizes	pg22
UNIT 10a.B	Thelma & Louise	(A): Exults	pg23
UNIT 10a.C	Some Mercurichrome	(A): Flirts	pg23

## 11. YOU’LL SEE

*(This is the confrontation between Benny that we’ve been waiting for. Benny is shown to be arrogant and callous, but he provides the boys with an opportunity to avoid rent by hamstringing Maureen’s show. This plan is complicated by the fact that Mark and Maureen are no longer dating, which Benny only found out about in the first song. Mark and/or Roger never seriously consider derailing the protest, which could potentially be a mistake, or an indication of how limited of an antagonist Benny really is. This song is an opportunity to show that Benny is not a stereotypical villain, though, as he actually has plans to transform the neighborhood into a thriving, modern, cyber village, starting with CyberArts. The song ends with an introduction to Life Support, and sets up the next time we see Mark, Angel, and Collins—although, again, logically, we should see “Support Group” next, and NOT “Tango”. But that’s how Larson chose to organize it!)*

UNIT 11.A	Benny’s Attitude	(B): Scolds, (M/R): Shames	pg23
UNIT 11.B	One Small Favor	(B): Dangles the carrot, (M/R): Denies	pg24

UNIT 11.C	You'll See Or You'll Pack	(B): Justifies & Threatens, (M/R): Judge	pg25
UNIT 11.D	Life Support Detour	(A/C): Assures, (M/R): Complains	pg26
UNIT 11.E	Boys, Boys, Boys	(ALL): One Up Each Other	pg26

## 12. TANGO MAUREEN – INTRO

*(We find out Joanne went to Harvard, that she has no idea how to use sound equipment, and, most tellingly, that she needs Mark: first for technical help then consolation. Neither one likes the other one bit. This is two dancers stepping out onto the floor prior to a heated tango.)*

UNIT 12.A	Into the Abyss	(M): Fortifies, (J): Digs In	pg27
UNIT 12.B	Great. (Wait!)	(M): Offers, (J): Surrenders	pg27

### 12a. TANGO MAUREEN

*(This is the “Light My Candle” equivalent for Mark and Joanne; it is two characters that begin as separate entities and end as equals, if not allies. Both understand that their lives are being tossed around by Maureen, and as Mark lived it and Joanne is living it, both find common ground with one another. This is also further foreshadowing and setting up the entrance for Maureen in “Christmas Bells.”)*

UNIT 12a.A	Fuckin’ Weird	(M/J): Probe for Weaknesses	pg28
UNIT 12a.B	Rebound	(M): Proves, (J): Denies	pg29
UNIT 12a.C	Getting Nauseous	(M): Teases, (J): Succumbs	pg29
UNIT 12a.D	The Tango	(M/J): Dance Around the Issue	pg30
UNIT 12a.E	She Cheated	(J): Divulges, (M): Assures	pg30
UNIT 12a.F	Can’t Leave Her	(M/J): Ally /w Each Other	pg31
UNIT 12a.G	Patched	(J): Hides, (M): Props Up	pg31

## 13. SUPPORT GROUP

*(Although called “Life Support” in the script, this is clearly the Larson equivalent to “Friends in Deed”, where he went to on multiple occasions with friends dying from AIDS. This scene creates a wider perspective for the AIDS crisis; it’s not just our principals who are struggling and dying, but innumerable others. This also gives us insight into why exactly Roger is so intent on staying in his house and why he is leery of Mimi.)*

UNIT 13.A	Introductions	(ALL): Consoles	pg32
UNIT 13.B	Quite an Operation	(M): Interrupts, (P): Defuses	pg33
UNIT 13.C	Fear’s My Life	(J): Challenges, (P): Soothes	pg33

UNIT 13.D	Because Reason Says	(J/R): Confesses	pg34
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#### 14. OUT TONIGHT

*(This is Mimi's chance to shine and show her true colors. We see how vivacious and explosive Mimi is after her flirty and vulnerable turn in "Light My Candle." Mimi is not the blushing flower of La Bohème, but a sleek feline looking for a good time and living every moment to the fullest. We also get a rare glimpse into Mimi's softer side, with the brief verse about sleeping in the city of neon and chrome, and how she, like Roger, is escaping life and not living it.)*

UNIT 14.A	Time For Danger	(Mi): Incites	pg34
UNIT 14.B	The Feline of Avenue B	(Mi): Flirts	pg35
UNIT 14.C	Where Scars Die	(Mi): Denies	pg35
UNIT 14.D	I'll Let You Make Me	(Mi): Won't Take "NO" For an Answer	pg36

#### 15. ANOTHER DAY

*(This is round two of "Light My Candle"; Mimi tries to take control and it backfires. She comes on strong and almost has Roger after the kiss, but then has to regroup and try again. Roger is trying to deny his emotions, both of dying young and loving another. He wants to save Mimi, and is using that as an excuse to not love again. I use the support group as a wall of sound backing Mimi, pushing Roger into a corner until he snaps and finally gets Mimi to leave. Also, Roger says "take the candle", and I've decided to take that literally, as Roger attempts to give Mimi back the candle she left after song 8. However, she leaves it on the table, and he contemplates it in the next scene.)*

UNIT 15.A	Just Can't Handle	(R): Recoils, Throws at Arm's Length	pg36
UNIT 15.B	Another Play	(R): Regroups	pg36
UNIT 15.C	Forget Regret	(Mi): Binds a Wounded Animal	pg37
UNIT 15.D	The Fire's Dead	(R): Mocks, Explains	pg37
UNIT 15.E	Must Let Go	(Mi): Reasons, (R): Endures	pg38
UNIT 15.F	Can't Control	(Mi/ALL): Reinforces, (R): Buckles	pg38
UNIT 15.G	Give in to Love	(Mi/ALL): Batters, (R): Retreats	pg38
UNIT 15.H	No Day But Today	(Mi/ALL): Surrounds, (R): Counterattacks	pg38

#### 16. WILL I

*(Through the fugue, we are shown that everyone asks these questions for some reason or another, most pointedly those dying from AIDS. The ensemble take on the role of Roger's swirling mind, and the candle*

*represents what he has lost and what he could gain. What he has been doing has only continued the nightmare, so perhaps it's time to change course and wake "from this nightmare.")*

UNIT 16.A	Alone Together	(R/J): Wonders	pg39
UNIT 16.B	Roger Joins the Chorus	(ALL): Cascades, Waves Crashing Into Him	pg39

### 17. ON THE STREET

*(This is a segue into Santa Fe, showing how New York City isn't the utopia that the movies make it out to be. This is also necessary to put a face and motivation to the homeless in Alphabet City. It also shows the brutality and insensitivity of the cops and the powder keg leading up to the riots.)*

UNIT 17.A	Out of Town – Santa Fe	(Carolers): Belittles	pg39
UNIT 17.B	Evening Officers	(Po): Suppresses, (M/Homeless): Exposes	pg40
UNIT 17.C	Motherfucking Artists	(Blanket): Shames, (M/A): Shrinks	pg40

### 18. SANTA FE

*(This is a "the grass is always greener" song, and is very reminiscent of "La Bohème", where the principals do very little but find ways to better enjoy good food and drink. The Broadway version of the play transforms the homeless into dancers, whereas I just use them as background singers and representations of the principal's emotions. This song highlights how Angel, even only after a few hours, has been wholly integrated into the circle of friends. This is also foreshadowing for Roger leaving toward the end of Act II—even though he does not participate in this song.)*

UNIT 18.A	New York City	(A): Make Light, (C/M): Shakes It Off	pg41
UNIT 18.B	A Metaphysic Puzzle	(C): Unlocks	pg41
UNIT 18.C	Make the Menu Sparkle	(C): Dazzles, (A): Plays Along	pg42
UNIT 18.D	We'll Pack	(ALL): Rejoices	pg43

### 19. I'LL COVER YOU

*(This is the one true love song in RENT. There are other love songs in the show to be sure, "I Should Tell You" and "Your Eyes", of course, but this is the only song not prompted by a crisis and with both partners in full health, mentally and physically. This song shows that the only healthy couple in the play consists of two gay men, which would be no small shock to a 1996 audience, or even to a 2013 audience in South Dakota. This also sets up the devastating reprise in Act II.)*

UNIT 19.A	Alone at Last	(A/C): Feels Each Other Out	pg43
UNIT 19.B	We're Everything	(A): Assures, (C): Meets Him Halfway	pg43

UNIT 19.C	You'll Be My, I'll Be Your	(A/C): Joke, Reaffirm	pg44
UNIT 19.D	A Thousand Sweet Kisses	(A/C): Surrounds, Invigorates	pg44

## 20. WE'RE OK

*(This is character development for Joanne. It gives us insight to the hectic lifestyle she lives and how she is trying to balance the Bohemian lifestyle with Maureen along with her professional work as a Harvard educated attorney. This shows how close Joanne is to boiling, and how utterly oblivious Maureen is to the repercussions of her actions. This is also another nod to the running theme of disconnection and how increasing the quantity of communication has degraded the quality of it.)*

UNIT 20.A	Steve & Maureen	(J): Reinforces	pg45
UNIT 20.B	Dad Makes Three	(J): Juggles	pg46
UNIT 20.C	Jill Makes Four	(J): Holds It Together	pg46

## 21. CHRISTMAS BELLS

*(This is a sprawling opus for all the character threads in the play, and shows how the play is moving inexorably toward a confrontation among all these opposing forces. At one point there are seven separate locations represented in this cacophony: Mark/Roger/Mimi, The Man/Junkies, the police, Collins/Angel/Coat Vendor, Vendor 2, Benny, and Maureen. This is where all the threads collide, at the prelude to Maureen's protest. This is finding beauty in the chaos of overlapping sounds of NYC. It also provides us with critical information; it is where Roger & Mimi makes amends, it is where Mimi is officially introduced to Mark, shows us that Benny's father-in-law is the investor at the café, that Collin's coat was pawned and that Angel buys him a new one. The challenge is trying to get the audience to understand even a fraction of what is taking place in this song.)*

UNIT 21.A	On TV – At Saks	(Homeless): Laments	pg47
UNIT 21.B	And It's Beginning to Snow	(Homeless): Dazzles, Hawks	pg47
UNIT 21.C	How About a Fur?	(V): Coaxes, (C): Pleads, (A): Insists	Pg48
UNIT 21.D	There – That's Her	(R): Justifies, (M): Grills	pg49
UNIT 21.E	Police & The Man	(Po): Intimidates, (Junkies): Beggars	pg50
UNIT 21.F	Make It Up To You?	(R): Apologizes, (Mi): Budes	Pg50
UNIT 21.G	Never Lack for Customers	(Man): Confronts, (R): Stands Tall	pg51
UNIT 21.H	Coats, Junkies, & Introductions	(C): Exclaims, (A): Soothes, (R): Introduces	pg51
UNIT 21.I	Christmas Chaos	(ALL): Bob & Weave, Crest and Trough	pg53
UNIT 21.J	Which Way to the Stage?	(Ma): Exults	pg56

**22. OVER THE MOON**

*(This is Maureen’s avant-garde performance art piece protesting the eviction of the homeless from the lot, and sparks Mark’s job offer from Buzzline. This is one of the few brief moments of humor for the audience and almost becomes a stand-up comedy routine. Maureen mixes as many metaphors as she can, most notably “The Cat and the Fiddle.” We get one desert in “Santa Fe” and another in Cyberland as well, and the only the way the thirst can be quenched is with humanity, something starkly absent from the world Benny has created, and this is done by “a leap of faith.” In the end, though, this performance is not meant to be understood literally, but is more an abstract and hilarious approach to a very serious situation for the characters.)*

UNIT 22.A	A Desert Called Cyberland	(Ma): Lays It All Out There	pg57
UNIT 22.B	A Way Out	(Ma): Hints Then Pounds It In	pg57
UNIT 22.C	Benny the Bulldog	(Ma): Shames, Riddles	pg58
UNIT 22.D	A Leap of Faith	(Ma): Reels ‘Em In	pg58
UNIT 22.E	Moo with Me	(Ma): Incites	pg58

**23. LA VIE BOHÈME / I SHOULD TELL YOU**

*(This song is about community, solidarity, and resistance. This is democracy in action, a statement that the only way to curb the power of a wealthy few is the steadfastness of the poor majority. This shows that the starving artist lifestyle is something to fight for, and that it has a strong and proud history through all veins of artistry. This is also the moment where Roger and Mimi make amends through HONESTY (another theme running through, most obvious by the constant refrain “I should tell you”), and the explosion of the riots offstage at the end of the act. This is also a crowd pleaser of a song; if we don’t have the tables in a long line ala “The Last Supper” with uniform dancing, it’d be like doing “Grease Lightning” without a car or “The Bottle Dance” from Fiddler without hats and bottles.)*

UNIT 23.A	Important Customer	(W): Shushes, (M): Defies & Acknowledges	pg59
UNIT 23.B	We’ll Stay	(C/Ma): Confronts, (W): Recoils	pg59
UNIT 23.C	A Toast	(B): Ridicules, (R/A): Questions	pg60
UNIT 23.D	Bohemia’s Dead	(B): Shames, Derides	pg61
UNIT 23.E	The Eulogy	(M): Parodies, Orchestrates	pg61
UNIT 23.F	A Definition	(M): Inflames, (ALL): Parrots	pg62
UNIT 23.G	She’s My Sister	(J): Suffers, (Ma): Warns	pg62
UNIT 23.H	Food & Drink	(ALL): Hungers & Thirsts	pg63
UNIT 23.I	Artists & Activists	(ALL): Lionizes	pg63

UNIT 23.J	Sexual & Cultural “Deviants”	(J/Ma): Flirts, (ALL): Glorifies	pg64
UNIT 23.K	An Impromptu Salon	(C/R/M): Conducts	pg65
UNIT 23.L	Infidelity	(Ma): Slips, (J): Pounces, (B): Probes, (Mi): Denies	pg66
UNIT 23.M	Salon Continued	(M/C/A): Directs, (ALL): Explodes	pg66
UNIT 23.N	Baggage	(Mi): Confronts, (R): Evades	pg67
UNIT 23.O	AZT Break	(Mi/R): Comes Clean	pg67
UNIT 23.P	I Should Tell You	(Mi/R): Divulges, Comes Together	pg68
UNIT 23.Q	Here Goes	(Mi/R): Withdraws, Fortifies	pg69
UNIT 23.R	A Leap Begins	(Mi/R): Takes the Plunge, Trusts	pg69
UNIT 23.S	Packed & Padlocked	(J): Slaps Her Down & Incites	pg70
UNIT 23.T	Call & Answer	(ALL): Crescendos & Rebels	pg70
UNIT 23.U	Final Restatement	(ALL): Lays It on the Line	pg71
UNIT 23.V	La Vie Bohème	(M): Recruits, (ALL): Celebrates	pg71
UNIT 23.W	VIVA LA VIE BOHÈME	(M): Hushes, (ALL): Stands Tall	pg72

**ACT II****24. SEASONS OF LOVE**

*(In addition to Larson’s “no day but today”, this is the strongest thesis for the show, asking “how do you measure the life of a woman or a man”, then answering it by “measure(ing it) in love”. This song is repeated throughout the second act, and also tells the audience that this act will compromise a year or time for the characters. Having the actors stand in a line singing is a strong convention of the show, and without very strong reason to do otherwise, I see no reason to work against this expectation of the audience.)*

UNIT 24.A	The Question	(ALL): Inquires	pg73
UNIT 24.B	The Answer	(ALL): Welcomes	pg73
UNIT 24.C	A Woman or a Man	(Soloists): Restates, Makes Plain	pg73
UNIT 24.D	Let’s Celebrate	(ALL): Rocks Out	pg74

**25. HAPPY NEW YEAR A**

*(This is setting up the action of Act II and shows us a very brief moment of all the couples coming together in harmony. Roger and Mimi are happy, Joanne and Maureen reunite, and Collins and Angel are healthy and together. This is a celebration, and shows how good the New Year can be.)*

UNIT 25.A	New Year's Rocking Eve	(Mi): Simmers, (R): Embraces	pg74
UNIT 25.B	Hicksville	(M): Teases, (Ma): Denies	pg75
UNIT 25.C	Be Your Slave	(Ma): Pleads, (J): Browbeats	pg76
UNIT 25.D	Chums	(M/J): Twines, (Ma): Complains	pg76
UNIT 25.E	Forget How to Begin	(Mi/R): Exults	pg77
UNIT 25.F	Bond & Pussy Galore	(ALL): Role Plays	pg78
UNIT 25.G	Power Comes On	(M): Awakens	pg79

**26. VOICE MAIL #3**

*(This is exposition, telling the audience that Mark's footage has gone national, and that now the prospect of a paying job as a filmmaker can be a reality. Also reinforces that his parents are Jewish and that Mark is terrible about returning phone calls.)*

UNIT 26.A	Mazeltov	(Mom): Guilt Trips	pg79
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**27. VOICEMAIL #4**

*(This is the punch-line for the previous voicemail's setup, it introduces us to Alexi Darling, the embodiment of selling out. This sets up the major crisis for Mark as we move into the second act.)*

UNIT 27.A	Give Alexi a Call	(Alexi): Trumpets	pg79
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**28. HAPPY NEW YEAR B**

*(This song demonstrates how close the characters are to unraveling and how the seemingly only thing keeping Roger/Mimi and Joanne/Maureen together is the combined influence of Collins/Angel. More importantly, this is also the resolution of the main driver of the plot up until this point: that Benny is dangling their rent as a carrot over Mark and Roger's heads. In some ways this makes Benny an extremely weak antagonist, but the tradeoff is that Benny becomes a much more three dimensional person. Benny diffuses one bomb by forgiving the rent but plants another by insinuating that Mimi is cheating on Roger with Benny. This song portends that this may not, in fact, be a "happy New Year," and it is confirmed by Mimi relapsing into her heroin addiction.)*

UNIT 28.A	Whiff of a Scheme	(Ma): Plots, (M/J): Fortifies	pg80
UNIT 28.B	Happy New...	(ALL): Rejoice	pg81

UNIT 28.C	End This War	(B): Barbers, Distracts, Deflects	pg81
UNIT 28.D	Photo Opportunity	(B): Cuts His Losses, (M/R/A): Mocks	pg82
UNIT 28.E	Break Ground Next Month	(B): Reasons, (Ma/R): Lambasts	pg82
UNIT 28.F	Mimi As Revenge	(B): Scorched Earth, (Mi): Attacks	pg83
UNIT 28.G	To Dogs	(A/C): Misdirects, (B): Reels	pg84
UNIT 28.H	Resolutions	(A/C): Soothes, Heals, (ALL): Resists	pg84
UNIT 28.I	You're Right	(ALL): Succumbs, Comes Together	pg85
UNIT 28.J	A Small Plastic Bag	(Man): Entices, (Mi): Surrenders	pg86

### 29. VALENTINE'S DAY CROSSOVER

*(It is indeed a crossover, showing us time elapsing from January 1 to February 14. The song reinforces Mark's role as an observer and narrator, and that Mimi and Roger have moved into together, leaving Mark alone in the loft. It also clearly sets up the explosion to come in "Take Me or Leave Me.")*

UNIT 29.A	Valentine's Day	(M): Reveals	pg86
UNIT 29.B	The Woman in Rubber	(J): Goads, (Ma): Bombards	pg86

### 30. TAKE ME OR LEAVE ME

*(This is a firecracker of a song, the duet that audiences love to hear. It communicates how strong a personality both Joanne and Maureen have, and that neither is willing to budge when it comes to their relationship. This is the first relationship of Act II to collapse, but it certainly won't be the last. However, it is important to note that when Angel dies, this is the only relationship that is repaired due to that traumatic event.)*

UNIT 30.A	Everybody Stares	(Ma): Talks Down to Her	pg87
UNIT 30.B	Diva Needs Her Stage	(Ma): Reenacts	pg87
UNIT 30.C	Kiss Pookie	(Ma): Clumsily Seduces	pg88
UNIT 30.D	You're One Lucky Baby	(J): Throws It Back in Her Face	pg88
UNIT 30.E	Can't Live with Them or Without Them	(J/Ma): Contracts & Expands	pg89
UNIT 30.F	I'm Gone	(J/Ma): Draws a Line in the Sand	pg89

### 31. SEASONS OF LOVE B

*(This is montage showing the passage of time from February into spring. The audience is reintroduced to the support group, now sans Angel and Collins as Angel is back in the hospital due to AIDS. Also shows us Mimi*

*buying drugs and Roger with Benny on his mind. The stage directions give me none of this, but from previous productions and what needs to happen in “Without You”, I’ve chosen to make these facts plain to the audience.)*

UNIT 31.A	Final Support Group	(Support): Warmly Greeting	pg90
UNIT 31.B	Coping	(All): Trying to Look Strong	pg90

### 32. WITHOUT YOU

*(A tremendous amount goes on during this song, none of which is explicitly referenced in the lyrics. We see four support group members die—this is not in the script, but I chose to add it as I felt it was in line with the intent of the song along with showing the effect of AIDS on the community at large. We also see Maureen/Joanne and Roger/Mimi reunite, along with Angel’s health deteriorating. Next to “Seasons of Love-Reprise”, this is the most poignant song in RENT.)*

UNIT 32.A	Happy Spring	(R): Pins Her Down, (Mi): Slips Aside	pg90
UNIT 32.B	Support Group Dies	(Mi): Reassures, Paints, Stumbles	pg91
UNIT 32.C	Collins Cares	(A): Suffers, (J): Second Guesses, (Mi): Builds	pg91
UNIT 32.D	Shared Misery	(R/Mi): Ponders, Copes	pg92
UNIT 32.E	Hospital to Hospital	(C/J): Comfort, (A): Endures, R/Mi): Entreats	pg92
UNIT 32.F	Life Goes On, But I’m Gone	(J/Ma/R/Mi): Reconcile, (C/A): Dig in	pg93

### 33. VOICE MAIL #5

*(This is a brief moment of levity between “Without You” and “Contact.” This is another segue showing time passing, in this case from spring to fall—both summer and spring is encompassed within “Without You,” which is hard to know as it all takes place indoors. It is Labor Day in this voice mail, and by Halloween Angel is dead.)*

UNIT 33.A	Labor Day with Alexi	(Alexi): Reels In	pg93
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### 34. CONTACT

*(This song is extremely tricky to stage. Abstractly, it communicates how messy and awkward the critical phases of life are for humanity: conception, birth, and death. All involve fluids, sweat, and latex, and all are considered private and taboo in many respects, which this song shatters completely. Angel’s death is handled quite poetically here, and this marks the CRISIS for the show, as his death propels our heroes into a downward spiral which only gets resolved at the climax of the play.)*

UNIT 34.A	Messy Birth	(ALL): Salivates	pg94
UNIT 34.B	Messy Life	(ALL): Consummates	pg95
UNIT 34.C	Take Me	(A): Pleads	pg95

UNIT 34.D	Messy Death	(ALL): Accuses, Accepts	pg96
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### 35. I'LL COVER YOU – REPRISE

*(Angel's body left during the previous song, but here is where the cast says goodbye to his soul. The eulogies are poignant and piercing, and is capped with Collin's touching reprise of "I'll Cover You" tinged with "Seasons of Love", which is in turn a reprise of Larson's life and death. The hole in their lives is visually reinforced by the reformation of the "Seasons of Love" line, with Angel noticeably absent.)*

UNIT 35.A	Saying Goodbye	(ALL): Eulogizes, (A): Parts Ways, (C): Prepares	pg97
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UNIT 35.B	To Rent Love	(C): Yearns, Reaches	pg97
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UNIT 35.C	When Your Heart Has Expired	(C): Elevates, (ALL): Supports	pg98
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### 36. HALLOWEEN

*(This is the only complete solo of Act II, and the only one for Mark. It is the narrator stepping out of his role and diagnosing the cause of the destruction that now defines his life. This is where Mark's mask slips, but by the end he has resumed his role as narrator; using it as a shield to insulate him from the pain of Angel's death and the impending death of half his friends.)*

UNIT 36.A	A Contract Signed	(M): Resigns, Ponders	pg99
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UNIT 36.B	Flickering Frames	(M): Grills, Justifies	pg99
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UNIT 36.C	Why?	(M): Berates, Condemns	pg99
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### 37. GOODBYE LOVE

*(This is a sprawling song, with many critical developments. We see how completely shattered the Bohemians have become since Angel's death. We see Maureen and Joanne reunite, but the rest remain isolated. We see that Roger's fears about Benny and Mimi are justified, but it seems that Mimi is only using Benny as revenge against Roger. The most important development is the dissolution of Mark and Roger's friendship, something that has been ironclad up until this point. We find out that Roger is afraid, and it is this fear that has kept him from Mimi, and Mimi has no will to live without Roger. All the characters say goodbye to what they love and to the concept of love itself. It should also be noted that this song is a huge nod to the third act of "La Bohème", where Rudolpho comments to Marcello about Mimi's deteriorating state and his desire to leave her.)*

UNIT 37.A	Who Said...	(ALL): Spars	pg100
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UNIT 37.B	Denial	(ALL): Hits Corners of the Ring, (M/B): Calms	pg100
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UNIT 37.C	Real Love	(Mi/J): Allies, (R): Lecture	pg101
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UNIT 37.D	I Can't Believe	(C): Defuse, (ALL): Regroups	pg101
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UNIT 37.E	Reconciliation	(Ma/J): Reconcile	pg102
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UNIT 37.F	Rejection	(Mi): Reaches, (R): Smacks Down, (Mi): Retaliates	pg103
UNIT 37.G	Escaping Your Pain	(M): Reaches Out, (R): Denies	pg103
UNIT 37.H	Mimi	(M): Gets to the Heart, (R): Counterattacks	pg103
UNIT 37.I	Live a Lie	(R): Demolishes, (M): Hangs by Thread	pg104
UNIT 37.J	Jealous or Afraid?	(M): Persuades, Lectures, (R): Runs	Pg104
UNIT 37.K	Don't Want to Watch Me Die	(Mi): Scolds, (R): Apologizes, Flees	pg105
UNIT 37.L	Need to Go Away	(M/B): Builds Up, (Mi): Buckles	pg105
UNIT 37.M	Hello Disease	(Mi): Recoils, Steels Herself	pg106

### 38. WHAT YOU OWN

*(This song is all about connection. Somewhat absurdly, Collins and Benny reconnect as the friends they used to be, and by the end of the song so do Roger and Mark. This song constitutes the climax of the arc for Roger and Mark, as Mark quits Buzzline and Roger finds his song. However, we don't get to see the fruits of those choices until the finale a few songs from here. My challenge in staging this was having both characters onstage in two distinct areas, singing about each other but not to each other. I wanted to highlight the idea of the two of them almost but not quite connecting. We only get to see them together when they both sing "I'm not alone" and reunite.)*

UNIT 38.A	Off the Premises, Queer	(P): Condemns, (C): Challenges	pg106
UNIT 38.B	The Old Benny	(C): Breaks the News, (B): Jokes	pg107
UNIT 38.C	What Am I Doing?	(M): Imagines, Scolds	pg107
UNIT 38.D	Cannot See/Cannot Hear	(R/M): Navigates, Lectures	pg108
UNIT 38.E	I Don't Own Emotion - I Rent	(R/M): Taunts	pg108
UNIT 38.F	Connection	(R/M): Closes the Distance	pg109
UNIT 38.G	Your Eyes/I Quit!	(R/M): Realizes, Embraces	pg109
UNIT 38.H	I'm Not Alone	(R/M): Recognizes, Reconciles	pg109

### 39. VOICE MAIL #6

*(This is the final voice mail, letting the audience know that Roger moved to Santa Fe but has since returned to New York City. This also tells us that Mimi has also gone silent to her parents, which will be explained in the following song. In addition to the information and humor provided by this song, this is also a functional montage*

*showing time passing from Halloween into Christmas along with covering the actors changing the tables back to the loft. It is both humorous and practical.)*

UNIT 39.A	Postcards	(Roger's Mom): Frets	pg110
UNIT 39.B	Please Call	(Parents): Pleads, (M Mom): Scolds	pg110

#### 40. FINALE A

*(We get to see the culmination of the carolers in their fourth and final refrain of "Christmas Bells are Ringing." Each time the carolers have grown by two, so that in this final song the entire ensemble of seven actors are carolers. When we move into the loft, we are treated to a taste of most of the major songs up until this point including: "Santa Fe," "I'll Cover You," "Tune Up," "Light My Candle," and "I Should Tell You." This song is analogous to the fourth act of "La Bohème", where the principals bring Mimi up to the loft to die next to Rudolpho.)*

UNIT 40.A	How Times Flies	(Homeless): Mock, Complain	pg110
UNIT 40.B	December 24, 10pm	(M): Introduces, (R): Apologizes, Jokes	pg111
UNIT 40.C	A Little Bird	(A): Cheers Up, (M/R): Welcomes	pg112
UNIT 40.D	Santa Fe Redux	(C/M/R): Fantasizes	pg113
UNIT 40.E	Huddled in the Dark	(C/M/R): Recovers, (Ma): Explains	pg113
UNIT 40.F	More Than Heat	(ALL): Consoles, (Mi): Searches, (R): Dashes	pg114
UNIT 40.G	I Should Tell You Redux	(Mi/R): Confesses, Comes Clean	pg115
UNIT 40.H	It Took All Year	(R): Lovingly Scold	pg115

#### 41. YOUR EYES

*(This is the climax of Roger's artistic arc; it is where we finally get to witness his song, and where we find out that the song is his love for Mimi. This is also the fulfillment of the "I should tell you" thread, and reinforces the need for connection in this show. As before, I chose to bring the candle into this scene; Roger asks for a candle, so why not have that candle be the candle that Mimi left in Act I that sparked his love in the first place? This is also the climax for the character of Roger as he finally performs his "one song.")*

UNIT 41.A	The One Song	(R): Serenades	pg115
UNIT 41.B	Something I Should Have Told You	(R): Bares His Soul	pg116
UNIT 41.C	A Candle Extinguished	(R): Mourns	Pg116

**42. FINALE B**

*(Mimi comes back to life, which she does not in “La Bohème” of course, and the cast relishes life as the entire company joins the stage. We get to witness the culmination of Mark’s artistic journey as well with the continuation of his film. When the ensemble joins the principals onstage they do so as actors and not characters, justifying the entrance of Angel as the actor coming back onstage and not the character.)*

UNIT 42.A	Over the Moon	(Mi): Spurts, Mesmerizes, (ALL): Attends	Pg116
UNIT 42.B	No Future – No Past	(M): Declares, (Mi/R): Embraces	pg117
UNIT 42.C	Proof Positive	(M): Presents, (ALL): Comes Together	pg117
UNIT 42.D	Thank You Jonathan Larson	(ALL): Encourages, Credits	pg118

**43. EXIT MUSIC**